

## R6 Suggestions for HQ Explo Summary – May 28, 2013

On October 15, 2012, an explosion at Camp Minden, Louisiana (the former Louisiana Army Ammunition Plant), prompted attention from EPA Region 6, Louisiana State Police (LSP), and national media. The explosion was of a storage magazine on Camp Minden that contained explosive powder owned by a private company known as Explo Systems. Explo Systems was demilitarizing military munitions under a Department of Defense (DOD) contract. Investigations conducted at Camp Minden discovered that Explo improperly stored approximately 10 million lbs. of explosive materials creating an imminent and substantial endangerment to human health and the environment. The LSP and Explo employees secured these explosive materials within additional magazines at Camp Minden. During site operations, the nearby town of Doyline (approximately 400 homes) was evacuated for a week in December due to the risk of explosion from the unsecured explosive materials within a radius of 7,000 feet.

Currently, all the unsecured explosive material that was improperly stored has been secured in magazines at Camp Minden. EPA Region 6, EPA OSWER Headquarters, and the Louisiana National Guard (LNG) have all requested DOD assistance with the situation at Camp Minden. DOD denied the LNG's requests to provide transportation and storage of the then unsecured explosive materials. Instead DOD sent a team from the Explosive Safety Board (ESB) to conduct an assessment of the potential short and long term hazards associated with the hazardous materials processes and storage associated with Explo Systems.

During their assessments in early April and early May, the ESB team categorized and identified the specific types of explosive materials associated with Explo Systems, including those stored within the magazines. Within the magazines at Camp Minden, the ESB identified 110,000 lbs. of M30 propellant, 1.8 million lbs. of tritonal (a TNT mixture), 300,000 lbs. of potassium nitrate, and 660,000 lbs. of nitrocellulose which need to be promptly addressed in addition to the 15 million lbs. of M6 propellant. The ESB also identified 3-50 lb. boxes and 2-drums containing crystallized ammonium picrate, a shock sensitive explosive.

The ESB intends to provide a report of their findings and recommendations to the LNG. LNG and DOD are awaiting the findings of the ESB report to determine future removal actions of the explosives associated with Explo Systems. EPA Region 6 continues to coordinate and provide technical support to the LNG, LSP, and the Louisiana Department on Environmental Quality. The State of Louisiana will formally request EPA support, once a removal plan is formalized.